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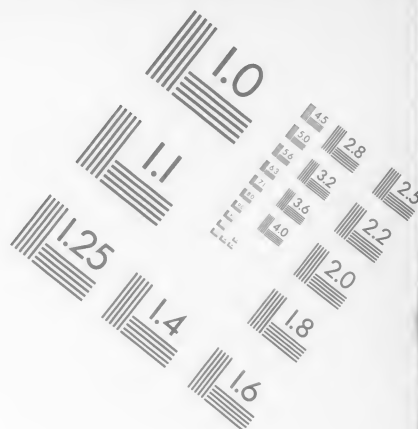
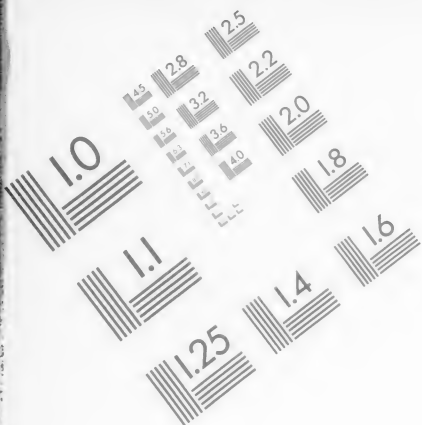


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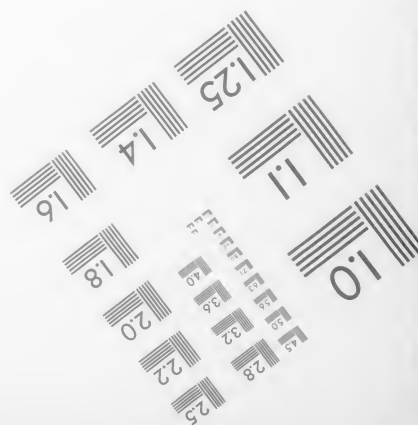
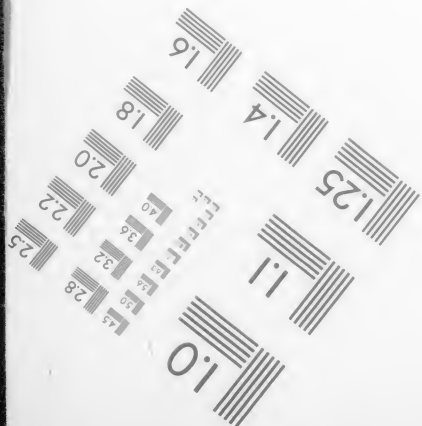
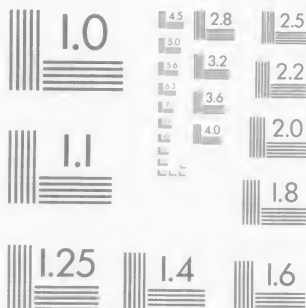
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AN APPEAL
TO
SCOTTISH CHRISTIANS
ON THE SUBJECT
OF
PROTESTANT ASSOCIATIONS.

"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom the people shall say, A confederacy;
neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be
your fear, and let him be your dread."—ISAIAH.

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1836.

APPEAL, &c.

No enlightened Protestant can be offended with well-meant and judicious means for exposing the errors of the church of Rome, and asserting, in opposition to them, the simple principles of scriptural Christianity. Such means employed with wisdom, charity, and zeal, while they could offend no true Protestant, could alarm no politician, and could scarcely produce any hostile re-action at all to be dreaded on the part of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects themselves. Indeed, with all deference to the judgment of ecclesiastics, we are not sure that it is fair dealing with the present generation of Protestants, to represent them as lukewarm to the doctrines which they profess, or, at least, as utterly inactive and supine, while all the living zeal and energy to be found in Christendom at this day is possessed by Roman Catholics. What are the 12,000 Protestant clergy paid by the State doing all their lives long, if not teaching the doctrines of Protestantism? Is this too small an array? Then, will it be affirmed that the ardent Methodists, and the various denominations of Dissenters, are less industrious in teaching the same doctrines? Besides, we are sure we could enumerate not a few societies having considerable resources, supported by Protestants in this country, and all of modern origin, having for their specific object the instruction of Roman Catholics in the doctrines of the word of God. We are inclined to think, that as far as efforts for the instruction of Roman Catholics are concerned, at no period in the history of British Protestantism has so much been doing as at this day. At the same

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time, it cannot be questioned, that a large proportion of professed Christians, and even of Protestant Christians, are so only in name; that such cannot be supposed to be alive either to the evils of the Roman Catholic system or to those other evils of which they are themselves the victims; and that a far greater amount of exertion than has hitherto appeared might be made by Christian wisdom and benevolence, to promote the spiritual interests of both classes.

But supposing that in place of lending additional aid to existing means for diminishing the influence of Catholicism, it were desirable to organize a new set of societies formally to assail the church of Rome, we beg leave to query, whether the state-paid clergy of this empire, or the more decided partizans of our ecclesiastical establishments, acting on the principles or through the medium of State churches, supply the most appropriate materials for constructing these new associations? In what position do they stand relatively to their Roman Catholic brethren? They hold the essential opposition betwixt the creed of the Catholics and their own, that theirs is Christian while that of the Catholics is antichristian; but they also know, and they proclaim it, that in this respect the Roman Catholics are in a similar predicament with themselves, holding their own creed to be true, and that of the Protestants to be false. Yet what is the practice of our churchmen? Do they say to their Roman Catholic brethren, "we think you are in dangerous error, but we know at the same time you entertain the same views of us. We would not for our lives do any thing so abhorrent to our consciences as to support your errors, which we think are injurious to civil society, and destroy the souls of men; and rather than impose on you a yoke which we ourselves would not endure, and which we applaud our virtuous forefathers for shaking off at the expense of their blood, we would subject ourselves to almost any privation,—we would suffer want, we would preach the gospel without charge, we would work with our own hands?"—No, with all his known conscientious reprobation of Protestantism, the Catholic is forced to support it equally

with the most zealous Protestant. Are the exactors of these compulsory contributions, are those who live by the fruits of this violation of the rights of conscience in their brethren, the fit persons to form societies for assailing, with a view to instruct and convert, the objects of these wrongs? What can they reply to the taunt which Roman Catholics will naturally cast upon them,—“Is there any thing among Roman Catholics more monstrous than this practice which you yourselves pursue? Which of the errors imputed by you to us can exceed in turpitude this error which you have exemplified for ages in your conduct towards us?—compelling us by law, civil and military, to support a creed and a church which our consciences disown. Wash your own hands ere you point to our pollutions. Be honest in your dealings with us, ere you address us in the character of religious instructors. Physicians, heal yourselves. First pluck the beam out of your own eyes, and then you shall see clearly to take the mote out of ours.” If there be one class of men who are less likely than another to benefit Roman Catholics, or rather more exactly fitted to produce a repulsion of all Protestant influence, we conceive the more vehement ecclesiastics and other partizans of our established churches are the men.

It will not, we think, be denied, that one object of these associations is to preserve in its integrity the present church establishment of Ireland. Their origin, in the exhibitions at Exeter Hall, and the more recent incursions of Mr O'Sullivan,—the known principles of those who have taken the lead in their formation,—and the sentiments, very freely uttered, and very zealously enforced, at their public meetings,—all concur in proving that the associations are intended as buttresses of the shaking Irish edifice; and that their members wish rather to repair its ruins, and enlarge indefinitely its dimensions, than to reduce its present size, and adapt it to the numbers and the condition of its occupants. Now, to say nothing of those admitted evils, which, in soft and courtly phrase, have been denominated, *the abuses of the Irish Establishment*, let this be carefully noted—it is the church of

the few supported by violence done to the many. In this respect, in the degree at least to which it possesses this character, it probably stands solitary and unique in ecclesiastical history, from the Mosaic age to this hour. In a country containing a population of fully 8,000,000, more than seven of those millions are against it. Nor has it sprung up in the country under the fostering care of the few who belong to it; the violence of another nation has forced it, and retained it by force, on the Irish people. It is as violent, and as foreign, as far as the Irish are concerned, as episcopacy was in Scotland in the days of the Charles's; or as Russian power is at this day in the prostrate kingdom of unhappy Poland. In the case of the Irish, as in that of our forefathers, and of the Poles, the bayonet alone protects the foreign domination; remove that arm, and Ireland, like Poland, is free. It must be added, strange though it may seem, that this church of the oppressing foreigner, so obnoxious to the nation, can have but a very slender hold on the hearts even of its own professed friends and members. For although it is confidently affirmed, that three-fourths of the property of Ireland is in the hands of Episcopalians, so indifferent are those rich partisans to the comfort of their own clergy, to preserve whose places and emoluments they have threatened to fight and bleed, that the whole empire is at this moment importuned in the most piteous tones of noble and sacerdotal wailing, to come forward to their help, and save them from starvation;—and for what? Solely for the suspension of a year's tithes. To preserve, extend, and perpetuate this most hated establishment that ever human violence formed, have these Protestant associations (in part, at least) been instituted. What will Roman Catholic Ireland reply to these friends of violence, to this insult from one people to another? “You come to us with words, smooth as butter, yet like drawn swords; you come to proselyte us with your books, and your tracts, and your Bibles, in one hand, and in the other, with weapons to defend this colossal incubus under which our country groans! Undo our heavy burdens; let our oppressed nation go free; satisfy

yourselves, with three centuries of spoliation and insult,—and then come to us in the character of benefactors and friends.”

It adds immeasurably to the force of these observations, that we find in that church a host of evils, known and acknowledged throughout the empire. Be it remembered, that by Scottish Presbyterians in particular, the very constitution of this church is regarded as unscriptural and mischievous. Its government is prelatical; and it is not more true that the church of Scotland is opposed to Popery, than that she is opposed to Prelacy.

If the ministers of the Scottish Establishment are true to their ordination vows, and if they possess that coincidence of view with their pious forefathers, of which they perpetually boast, “Prelacy, that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending upon that hierarchy” must be “extirpated, as the most powerful mean, by the blessing of God, for settling and preserving *the true Protestant religion, with perfect peace in his Majesty's dominions*, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his Majesty's throne to all ages and generations.”* Every minister of the church of Scotland knows, or ought to know, yes, and every well-taught private member, that these are the recorded and sanctioned dogmas of his own church; that these are the orthodox *dicta* of his own venerable assembly; that, therefore, his own church being the judge, Prelacy, be it English or Irish Prelacy, so far from being a bulwark of the Protestant faith,—so far from being necessary to the Protestantism of Ireland, or from supporting, by its altars, the throne of the king, and promoting, by its influence, the peace of the kingdom,—is at war with all these; and, therefore, that its utter “extirpation” (as far, at least, as legal support is concerned) would be “*the most powerful mean*, by the blessing of God, of advancing these

* Solemn League. Act of Ass. 1645.

objects, dear to all loyal British Protestants," viz. "*settling and preserving the true Protestant religion, perfect peace in his Majesty's dominions, propagating the same to other nations, and establishing his Majesty's throne.*" Dr Lee knows well the sentiments of his own church, Dr Gordon cannot be ignorant of them, and Mr Candlish is an ingenuous man;—what can these respected men mean by leaguings openly with O'Sullivan in his Prelatical mission, and in doing what they can to further associations, formed under the auspices of that apostle of Irish prelacy, in support of a system, which *their own church*, which they themselves confess to be opposed to "true Protestantism, the establishment of the throne, and the peace of the kingdom?"

While such are the sentiments, most solemnly professed, of the Scottish church respecting the prelacy, it is worth while to observe the sentiments of the prelatical church, expressed with no less solemnity, respecting Presbyterians and all others who separate from her communion. The following are some of the "canons" of that most venerable and apostolical church:—*Canon VII.* "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the government of the church of England, *under his Majesty*, by archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, and the rest that bear office in the same, is antichristian, or repugnant to the word of God, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and so continue until he repent, and publicly revoke this his wicked error." *Canon VIII.* "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm or teach that the form and manner of making and conserving bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth any thing in it that is repugnant to the word of God; or that they who are made bishops, priests, or deacons, in that form, are not lawfully made, nor ought to be accounted, either by themselves or others, to be truly either bishops, priests, or deacons, until they have some other calling to these divine offices; let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, not to be restored until he repent, and publicly revoke such his wicked errors." *Canon X.* "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm that such ministers as refuse to subscribe to the form and manner

of God's worship in the church of England prescribed in the communion-book, and their adherents, may truly take unto them the name of another church, not established by law, and dare presume to publish it, that this their pretended church hath of long time groaned under the burden of certain evils imposed upon it, and upon the members thereof before-mentioned, by the church of England, and the orders and constitutions therein by law established; let them be excommunicated, and not restored until they repent, and publicly revoke such their wicked errors." *Canon XI.* "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm or maintain, that there are within this realm, other meetings, assemblies, or congregations, of the king's born subjects, than such as by the laws of this land are held and allowed, which may rightly challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful churches; let him be excommunicated, and not restored, but by the archbishop after his repentance."*

Such are the pretensions of that church, to the support of which, as the medium of promoting Protestantism, these associations are devoted,—a church which thus brands herself with characters of intolerance, scarcely less deep and glaring than those of the very system they propose to assail, in the days of its thickest darkness, and most terrific power.

Nor is this all. Without a grievous sacrifice of doctrinal principle, avowed by the Scottish church, in common with Protestant dissenters, it is impossible that the members of these bodies can co-operate with the Episcopalian party, in the way of countenancing the support of the Episcopalian system. Let us glance at the erroneous and delusory character of the English service, in many of its parts, and at the antichristian power ascribed by the prelacy to the church, and to the sovereign in regard to the church.

From youth to age, from birth to burial, the influence of Episcopalian rites is in a high degree delusory, and perilous to the souls of men. Scarcely has the Episcopalian babe seen

* The Book of Common Prayer, &c. Fol. Lond. 1706.

the light till delusion is muttered over it betwixt priest and god-father; in its tender and unsuspecting years religion is employed to familiarize its mind to delusion; in its advance to manhood, delusion is confirmed by the office of the "confirmation;" the holy communion itself, mingled profusely with Episcopalian additions, rather strengthens than breaks the delusive spell; amidst the alarms of mortal sickness delusion still lifts her presumptuous voice; and at last, unless excommunication has gone before, (a rare occurrence, except in the instance of Presbyterians and other dissenters, who are religious outlaws, "*ipso facto*,") delusion is still heard amidst the awfulness of death and the sepulchre.

The following are doctrines and practices of that church, which, in the face of their own principles, modern Protestant associations would employ as the chosen instrument for repelling Popery. In the "Order of baptism," the priest says of every child, "we receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the cross, (here the priest shall make a cross on the child's forehead,) in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end. Amen." Immediately after this rite "the priest shall say, Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, *that this child is regenerate*, and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks to Almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning." After which, "the priest shall say, We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee *to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him as thine own child by adoption*, and to incorporate him with thy holy church." All this the poor child is taught to believe till his *confirmation*; and then, he is enjoined to give this reply to the second question proposed to him in the awful presence of my lord the bishop: "Who gave thee this name?" Ans. "My god-fathers and

god-mothers," (names of superstitious folly which ought to be obliterated from the vocabulary of Christian worship,) "*in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.*" As if all this were not enough, "The order of the ministration of the holy communion" follows; in which, after a profusion of ceremonies, "the priest (or the bishop being present) shall stand up, and turning himself to the people, *pronounce this absolution*;" which, being said and heard, and, it is to be feared, believed by multitudes, after other ceremonies, the bread and the wine are given to each communicant, with these words, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. . . . The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." After all this, how fares it with the sick and the dying? The priest visits the sufferer, repeats many prayers and exhortations, "earnestly moves such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor;" moves each individual "*to make a special confession of his sins*, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the priest shall absolve him, (if he humbly and heartily desire it,) after this sort. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: *and by his authority committed to me*," (did ever Pope speak more loftily?) "*I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" The appropriate conclusion from these premises is found in "The order for the burial of the dead," which is used *for all*, except such as "die unbaptized," (not being "regenerate, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," by the baptism of the church) "or excommunicated, or have laid violent hands upon themselves." In all other cases, "while the earth shall be cast upon the body by some standing by, the priest shall say, Forasmuch as it hath pleased God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear

brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; *in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life* through our Lord Jesus Christ."

That the Episcopalian church has received into her creed much scriptural truth, and that much piety and learning have been found among many of her members, and not a few of her office-bearers, who has ever questioned? But the church of Rome herself holds much scriptural truth; she has had her Pascals and her Fenelons: of learned men in great numbers she can boast; and who has affirmed that piety has altogether been smothered among her members even by the whole weight of her errors and superstitions? Besides, had not the church of the episcopacy the same amount of truth in her creed, and equal learning and worth among many connected with her, when she banished or oppressed the English Puritans, or persecuted our Scottish ancestors with fire and sword? If she has truth which may guide, she has also abundance of delusion which may mislead; if she holds the Scripture, she has also abundance of tradition to make it void; and it is against this *neutralizing influence* of the system that true and consistent Protestants should lift their voice.

It is probable that *the powers claimed for the church*—their own church—by Episcopalians, *and those conceded to the sovereign by that church*, will be regarded by many Christians as scarcely less objectionable than the deceptive principles to which allusion has been made. The claim of infallibility excepted, has Rome ever arrogated any thing more presumptuous, than the power of absolving from sin? Yet every Episcopalian priest and bishop claims, it has been seen, this power, and pretends to exercise it. In the 20th Article it is asserted that "the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies; and authority in controversies of faith;"—a power, which effectually interposes the authority of man betwixt God and the consciences of men,—which authorizes the introduction into the simple worship of the New Testa-

ment, of ceremonies of human invention, to an undefined extent,—and which prepares the way for ecclesiastical corruption, oppression, and tyranny, to a degree not inferior to any thing accomplished by the papal infallibility itself. A power which, though now repressed by the spirit of the age, and by our free civil institutions, has not always been so in the Episcopalian church; by the influence of which, thousands of her best ministers, and hundreds of thousands of her best members, were banished from her pale; which filled the jails of England with Christian prisoners, drove myriads into distant exile, and stained with the blood of martyrs the scaffolds, and fields, and mountain sides of our native land.

The formidable power over the church vested by Episcopacy in the monarch, is far less thought of than it ought to be. It is, to use Warburton's language, (employed by that prelate with entire approbation,) *the surrender of the natural independence of the church*,—it is a slavish abdication of Christ's liberty for a yoke of bondage to a human ruler,—while on the part of the sovereign (we speak constitutionally) it is a usurpation of Christ's rights, involving the guilt of impiety, and periling the stability of the throne of these kingdoms. *It is curious to remark how this power has vacillated betwixt Rome and the English kings.* In the ancient and palmy days of popery, the Pope was the head of the church of England, as part of the one Catholic church, over which he presided. When Henry broke with Rome, he created no new power over the church, he did not alter the quality of any; he found a convenient power already created and acknowledged, and he simply transferred the power of Rome to London, claiming for himself what he and his people formerly acknowledged in the Pope, *supreme headship in all causes ecclesiastical*. Mary succeeded, returned to the faith which her father had forsaken, and in reconciling herself to the papal see, conferred no new authority upon his Holiness, but merely gave him back the power of which her father had deprived him. Elizabeth followed: and in re-establishing Protestant Episcopacy,

resumed to herself the same ancient supremacy over the church, which the Pope had first, which Henry took, which Mary gave back, and which now returned to the English princess, by whom it has been faithfully transmitted to the present occupant of the British throne! The nature of this most impious and perilous power is too well defined in statute, and exemplified in the civil and ecclesiastical history of these kingdoms to admit of dispute. The following is the first paragraph of the 37th Article. "The King's majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other his dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates in this realm, *whether they be ecclesiastical or civil*, doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction." By the "36th canon," entitled "Subscriptions required of such as are to be made ministers," it is decreed, "That no person shall hereafter be received into the ministry, nor either by institution or collation be admitted to any ecclesiastical living, nor suffered to preach, to catechise, or to be a lecturer or reader of divinity in either university, or in any cathedral or collegiate church, city, or market town, parish church, chapel," &c.—"except he shall first subscribe to these Articles following." The first of these Articles is this: "That the King's majesty, under God, *is the only supreme governor in this realm*, and of all other his highness' kingdoms, and dominions, and countries, *as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes*, as temporal." But if all this should not be deemed sufficiently express, the words of the statute supply the deficiency. "Albeit the king's majesty justly and rightfully is, and ought to be, the supreme head of the church of England, and so is recognised by the clergy of this realm in their convocations, yet nevertheless, for corroboration and confirmation thereof, and for increase of virtue in Christ's religion within this realm of England, and to repress and extirp all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same, Be it enacted, that our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, *shall have full power and authority*, from time

to time, *to visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend, all such errors, heresies, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, whatsoever they be, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction ought, or may be lawfully reformed, repressed, ordered, redressed, corrected, restrained, or amended*, most to the pleasure of Almighty God, the increase of virtue in Christ's religion, and for the conservation of the peace, unity, and tranquillity of the realm."—26 Henry VIII. cap. 1.*

To trace and exemplify the exercise of this royal power over the English and Irish churches would require a volume. The following examples are sufficiently prominent in the authorized books of the church, although very generally overlooked by readers. Prefixed to the Articles is a "Declaration" to which the following paragraphs belong. "Being by God's ordinance, according to our just title, defender of the faith, *and supreme governor of the church* within these our dominions, we hold it most agreeable to this our kingly office, and our own religious zeal, to conserve and maintain the church *committed to our charge*, in unity of true religion, and in the bond of peace; and not to suffer unnecessary disputations or questions to be raised, which may nourish faction both in the church and commonwealth. We have, therefore, upon mature deliberation, and with the advices of so many of our bishops as might be conveniently called together, thought fit to make this declaration following: That the Articles of the church of England (which have been declared and authorized heretofore, and which our clergy generally have subscribed unto) do contain the true doctrine of the church of England agreeably to God's word, which we do therefore ratify and confirm, requiring all our loving subjects to continue in the uniform possession thereof, and *prohibiting the least difference from the said Articles*; which to that end we command to be new printed, and this our declaration to be

* Dr Gibson's Codex Jur. Eccles. Lond., 1713. Folio Edition.

published therewith." To the Articles the "Ratification" is annexed, in the same style of royal supremacy. And so late as the year 1830, the following edict was issued by *the present head of the church*, and subscribed by a well-known ex-minister, appointing by his "*royal will and pleasure*;" the *very words* in which the whole English and Irish churches (oh the abject slavery of that obedience which submits implicitly to such impious dictation!) were to worship their Maker on the four following holidays,—the anniversary of the gunpowder plot—of the death of the blessed royal martyr Charles I.—of the restoration of the royal profligate and persecutor Charles II.—and of a really auspicious event, the accession of our present sovereign. "Our will and pleasure is, that these four forms of prayer and service made for the fifth of November, the thirtieth of January, the twenty-ninth of May, and the twenty-sixth of June, be forthwith printed and published, and annexed to the Book of Common Prayer and Liturgy of the united church of England and Ireland, to be used yearly on the said days, in all cathedral and collegiate churches and chapels; in all chapels of colleges and halls, within our universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, and of our colleges of Eton and Winchester, and in all parish churches and chapels within those parts of our united kingdom called England and Ireland. Given at our court at St James's, the twenty-eighth day of June, 1830, in the first year of our reign. By his majesty's command, R. Peel."

If we pass from these errors in the very constitution of the Episcopalian church, and glance at a few of those acknowledged evils in the working of the vicious system, we shall perceive still more clearly how unsuitable episcopacy now is to become the medium of benefit to Roman Catholics. We shall confine ourselves in a great measure to Ireland.

It has already been remarked that the Irish church is the church of a small minority, excluding the great majority of the inhabitants. The whole ecclesiastical revenues of Ireland are annually seized by what the nation deems, and can-

not but deem, a legal confiscation of their property, on behalf of a privileged handful. Were these guilty recipients of the spoils of Ireland in other respects exemplary, and did they sin only by the blinding influence of ignorance and prejudice; were they models of meekness, and gentleness, and all goodness; (there have been, and there are, men of excellence among them, good in spite of the system;) were they receiving only to use with a wise and rigid economy that portion of their more than dubious wealth, which their temporal comfort might require, in order to scatter the residue among the spoiled and the starving around them; were they lowly, self-denied, faithful, indefatigable Christian pastors, spending and spent for the people whom they have sworn to serve, then the worth of the men might form some apology for the system, the hostility of injured Catholics might be conciliated or allayed, in the accomplishment of the end facile moralists might forget the means, and much evil might be overlooked for the sake of the good that preponderated. What are the facts?

England has ten archbishops and twenty-five bishops. The handful of Irish Episcopalians are provided with four archbishops, and twenty-eight bishops, having powers, titles, palaces, lands, equipages, and wealth befitting the style of princes; as if purposely elevated by the genius of evil to insult and outrage the poverty in the midst of which they are placed, and to rouse the worst passions of which the human heart is susceptible against that blessed religion of which they call themselves the ministers. To the seats of these antichristian functionaries swarms of sinecures are attached. Of these the official Report states, that "ninety-four are mere sinecure offices, save and except the duty of preaching occasionally in their respective cathedral churches." In seventy-five instances the returns made to the commissioners by the individuals themselves state, that they have *no duties whatever to perform*. Yet for these "no duties" the dean of Raphoe receives £1491 per annum; the precentor of Lismore £448, and the archdeacon of Meath £723! The parishes in Ire-

land amount to 2348; but in so many cases have several parishes been united to form what is called a *benefice*,—a living for one parish priest,—that the number of benefices in all Ireland is 1385. These *unions* are in some cases strangely formed, for the interest of the incumbent it may be, but certainly without any regard to that of the people: “Thus, in the union of Bilcooly, we find ten parishes thrown together, one of which is six miles, and another ten miles, from the rest. In the union of Ballymahill, which consists of nine parishes, one is 27 miles from the church. In the union of Buronchurch, which consists of 14 parishes, three of them are stated by the commissioners to be at opposite extremities of the county of Kilkenny, many miles from each other, and from the body of the union.” Of these unfortunate parishes, of which assuredly Ireland only can furnish examples, and of which not Popery but a mis-called Protestantism alone can boast, there are 151 in which there is not a single Protestant; 194 which contain fewer than ten; 155 without either Protestant, clergyman, or church; and 895 without 50 Protestants to each. Of the 1385 holders of benefices, 496 are said to be non-resident; and no wonder, when so many parishes are *livings*, not *cures*: places created to give a livelihood to men who could hardly find one elsewhere, but in which people cannot be found stupid enough to place themselves under their care. Of 264 *benefices*, (and how many *parishes* do 264 *Irish* benefices include!) “there are many of which the rector, his children, his servants, his wife, with perhaps a few occasional policemen, constitute the whole of the congregation.” The following is a table of seven benefices, taken from different parts of Ireland, and containing, *in all*, 62 Protestants, *in which there is no church, and no resident clergyman*; while the parochial income from tithes amounts to £2888 annually:—

	Protestants.	Resident Clergymen.	Church.	Tithes.
Modeligo (Union),	4	None.	None.	£440 0 0
Seskeinane,	3	None.	None.	335 0 0
Clenne,	17	None.	None.	559 19 0
Effin,	10	None.	None.	320 0 0
Gilbertstown,	8	None.	None.	250 0 0
Mahoonagh,	8	None.	None.	500 0 0
Killeedy,	12	None.	None.	484 12 0

In another table are 50 parishes, the united revenues of which are £11,897, while the whole Protestant flock consists of 527 individuals; and, as if to aggravate the evil of such a state of things, in these 50 parishes *there are 42 without a resident clergyman, and 41 without a church!*

It is worth while to observe in what proportion this so called *national church of Ireland* has supplied accommodation for worship, as compared with that afforded by other religious denominations. The Episcopalians have 1534 places for worship, the Roman Catholics 8105, and the Presbyterians 452.*

But we must have done with our selections from these disgusting details. There are some circumstances, however, connected with these abuses which must not be overlooked. They have been drawn into public notice, not by the church herself making virtuous efforts for her own reformation; not by the honest remonstrances of some pious members of that church, afraid of sharing in the responsibility arising from connection with such wickedness under the name of religion, “faithful among the faithless,” and lifting their intrepid voices against the surrounding abominations; but by a body of men ill-fitted to interfere with religious matters,—the British House of Commons,—who have been reviled for their pains with the most cordial and unsparing virulence of the clergy of our establishments. The other circumstance alluded to is the remorseless violence to which the Irish church has long resorted for the extortion of tithes from the Irish people,—a

* Hamilton's Tables, Ridgeway, 1835.—The Irish Church, Ridgeway, 1836.

violence often exercised by military, or armed police,—and which, after sparing neither age nor sex, after tearing from the hovels of the peasantry the last comforts remaining to them, and not shrinking even from blood, has dared to call for still more soldiery, till it has drawn down the just rebukes of the government itself. Yes, Ireland has exhibited the unnatural, the monstrous spectacle of the professed ministers of Jesus calling for the soldiery, and of the civil power refusing and rebuking the call. The following remarks, from the pen of an intrepid minister of the church of England, deserve to be universally known, and the more so as their author does not even profess any partiality towards Dissenters. Having been invited by letter from an ecclesiastical superior to contribute to the necessities of the Irish clergy, he thus replies:—“As one of the clergy to whom your letter in the *Hereford Journal* is addressed, I answer your call; but at the same time I feel myself bound to declare, (and I do so with pain and with sorrow of heart; but the occasion allows me not to remain silent, or to disguise my sentiments,) that I have no compassion for the Irish clergy, who appear to me to have had no compassion on the unhappy people in the midst of whom they are established,—established, I grieve to say, not as ministers of good, but as ministers of ill; or, if here and there, one and another, of a little good, yet universally of much more ill,—and are placed there upon a footing, and have adopted or consented to a principle of maintenance, that, so applied, completely alters the nature of the establishment, and changes it from Christian to unchristian, inhuman, impious, (before God, and I think, weighing things in his balance, I can form no other judgment!) and makes it impossible for such an institution to be of Him, or to be sanctioned by Him, who gave authority to his ministers to this extent,—no farther,—that they should receive of men’s carnal things in return for their spiritual things,—and who has commanded all men to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. Nevertheless, Sir, though I have no compassion for the Irish clergy,

—or, at least, though whatever compassion I have for them is mingled with feelings of a very different kind,—though I regard the establishment to which they belong as an odious and a guilty establishment, maintained upon an odious and a guilty principle, and regard them, through their acquiescence in that principle, and indeed identification of themselves with it, as individually partaking in its guilt, and meriting to share in its odium,—and though in their late emergency they have not scrupled to appeal to the sword for relief, and might justly, therefore, be left to such relief as the sword can bring,—yet, in deference to your authority, and to that of the bishop, I answer your call with such contribution as my means enable me to offer. . . . The point between us is nothing else, is nothing less, than this,—Whether the established church in Ireland be a Christian church, whether its ministry be a Christian ministry, or not? I argue the negative, that it is not; and that they are not, upon this ground,—because that church has accepted at the hands of man a law contradictory to the law of Christ,—an immoral, unjust, and uncharitable law,—contradictory to, and destructive of, the moral, just, and charitable law given to it by Christ for its direction in such matters,—that by so doing it has abjured Christ, and can be considered no longer, and in truth is no longer, Christian, but is thereby become entirely a thing of that world whose law it has preferred to the law, whose patronage it has preferred to the patronage of, and for whose sake it has denied and forsaken, its divine Master. The law objected to is the law of tithe,—not the law of tithe in itself, but that application or misapplication of the law of tithe, whereby not only is the tithe received from those who are in communion with the church to which the tithe is paid, (and so far Christianity permits,) but whereby tithe is exacted, reluctantly and violently exacted, from those who hold no communion with the church that thus exacts their tithe of them. This to do, and to persevere in doing, appears to me to unchristianize the church doing it, and to unchristianize, or manifest that he is not Christian,—that he knows not,

feels not, the force of Christianity,—every minister of that church, consenting to, abiding by, partaking in, the unchristian, ungodly, and inhuman deed of his church.”*

This language may be thought strong; but it is forced by a conviction of its truth, from an honest man, prejudiced by education, habit, and interest, in favour of the Episcopalian church. Indeed the moral results of the identifying of Irish Episcopacy with Protestantism, can hardly be too strongly put. Let us but place ourselves in the circumstances of Irishmen, and examine what the effect must be on their minds. So many archbishoprics, and bishoprics, deaneries, archdeaconries, prebendaries, precentorships, parish unions, &c.—places known from time immemorial as prepared stalls for the wild steeds of the aristocracy to fatten in,—shepherds without flocks,—pay without labour,—tithes for those whose existence was never submitted to the ocular inspection of the tithe-payers,—pluralities all the land over,—oppression,—spoliation,—violence by proctors,—violence by police,—violence by soldiers;—and all this in order to the Christianity and Protestantism of Ireland! Well may Britons blush for such a Protestantism, such a Christianity. But if the Irish are men, if they reason with human faculties, if human feelings stir within them, what must be the effect on them, their opinions and circumstances considered, of this union of Protestantism and Christianity with such a system in the law and nomenclature of the country? In their circumstances can they help exclaiming, “If this be Protestantism, if this be Christianity, better for us that Christianity and Protestantism had never visited our shores?”

Indeed one wonders how by possibility such a system should have stood so long; how this Colossus of evil has not long since been struck and shivered by the angry lightnings of heaven, or thrown to the earth by some violent commotion

* ‘A Series of Letters, touching the Church of England and Ireland, addressed to the Dean of Hereford, Earl Grey, the Archbishop of Dublin, &c. &c. by the Rev. Maurice James, B.D., Rector of Pembridge, Herefordshire.’—London: Simpkins & Co. 1835.

of the Irish people. Well might Lord Morpeth express himself to this effect, in proposing his plan for the diminution of the evil, as he is reported to have done in the House of Commons, that if the Irish Episcopalian church were not there *de facto*, no man would propose that it should now be placed there.

Scottish Christians, what is your judgment of Protestant associations intended to assail popery in Ireland through the medium of this Episcopalian church? Should not the Christians of Scotland, in consistency and fidelity, first of all proclaim to the churchmen of Ireland, “Before *you* enter the lists with popery, reform yourselves. Your constitution is antichristian, and is a very copy of the hierarchy you oppose. We dare give no sanction to your offices and your powers, ye bishops and archbishops! You have sold yourselves to the State; you call a secular prince your head; you swear subjection to the king in all causes ecclesiastical; and we could not look with tranquillity to the judgment-seat, had we any approving sympathy with those who thus profane the honour of our only King, even Jesus, the Son of God. Your whole institution is overrun with superstition; your feasts and your fasts; your saints’ days and your other holidays; your vain repetitions,—your delusive rites,—are not of Christ, but of Rome. Ye are men of bigotted intolerance; ye have really or virtually excommunicated the churches of the Redeemer; and never have ye held out to us the right hand of brotherhood,—never have ye rendered your pulpits accessible to the most venerable and gifted of our ministers,—never have ye condescended to notice us but with contempt, till your idol the State has begun to alarm you with its frowns, or till fell hunger has humbled you. Ye are men of violence, ye are men of blood. Nor can we hesitate to say, that, to such as you, we must apply these terrific words of the prophet, spoken in the name of Jehovah: *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!*

should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.—Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord God, Behold I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.—Ezek. xxxiv. 1—10.

We dare not, then, slander true Protestantism by identifying your interests with its prosperity, or by ranking you with its enlightened friends. We cannot look upon you as qualified to advance Scriptural Protestantism in Ireland. We reiterate in your ears the language of our forefathers, which is still ours,—not the establishment, but the removal of your prelacy is *‘the most powerful mean, by the blessing of God, for settling and preserving the true Protestant religion, with perfect peace in his Majesty’s dominions, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his throne to all ages and generations.’*”

Still, let us not shut our ears to the soft whispers of charity, in favour of this uncharitable church of Ireland. Of “the excellent,” the men of worth, whom even that system still continues unhappily to attract to it, (how melancholy is the power of a vicious system over even good men!) we dare only suggest, whether this benevolent call of heaven does not indicate with sufficient clearness their duty, *“Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”*

The attitude which these associations assume towards the great body of Protestant Dissenters is as fantastic as can well

be imagined. They stand still statelier, they frown still more awfully, they look more of the horrible and unutterable, towards Dissenters than Papists. Scottish Presbyterians have imported the slang of Oxford and Cambridge, and with solemn grimace pass the word ‘Dissenters, Papists, and Infidels.’ That Dissenters and Papists have coalesced is now their incessant cry. Coalesced in what? If coincidence in some things, or many things, be coalescence, have not they themselves coalesced with papists? Do they part with their noses, or put out their eyes, because papists choose to wear these facial ornaments? Do they refuse to eat, and drink, and sleep, lest they should coalesce with papists in these corporeal indulgences? Will they renounce the Bible because papists hold it? or will they keep Saturday holy lest they should coincide with papists in keeping Sunday? The Dissenters coalesce with Papists! What? in receiving the dogmas of the Catholic faith, in observing the peculiar rites of the Catholic worship! If one is desirous of finding Protestant churches abounding with symbols of the Roman Catholic superstition, where shall they be found? His Grace the archbishop, my Lord the bishop, crosses, altars, consecrated pictures, consecrated edifices, consecrated burial-grounds, human absolutions, human anathemas, a man or a woman the head of the Christian church, human authority in matters of religion, violence and blood associated with the Christian name,—where are these to be found? The simplicity of worship among the Protestant Dissenters,—their united and consistent adherence to the great principle, that God alone is Lord of the conscience, and that no man, or body of men, may dictate to their fellow-men in matters of religion,—their careful abstinence from every practice peculiar to Roman Catholics,—their struggles in the cause of civil and religious freedom, and the almost unanimous support they have given to every ministry favouring popular rights and the general good, from the days of the Puritans down to this hour, are matters of history or observation. Oppressed themselves, the Dissenters cannot but sympathize with the oppressed, cannot

but sigh for the breaking of the rod of every oppressor, and cannot, therefore, but sympathize with their long-wronged and cruelly-oppressed Roman Catholic fellow-subjects in Ireland. Nor, we believe, is there any other expedient than the one now proposed by Dissenters, and for which the country will quickly call, for avoiding one of two evils,—either the pensioning of the Roman Catholic clergy, which would be a virtual establishment of popery,—or the transferring, by resistless necessity, the Irish church establishment to the Roman Catholic church, its original and only rightful possessor. If you endow the Episcopalian minority, how can you refuse endowment to the Roman Catholic majority? If an ecclesiastical establishment, at the expense of Ireland, must be kept up, has not Ireland the right, and is the day remote when she shall have the power, to say, Then give that establishment to the religious denomination that includes, according to your own showing, nine-tenths of the Irish people? The Irish church, it is plain enough, is a machine ready-made for the hands of the Roman Catholics. The nation has the right to say to the few at present working it, for their own purposes, “Step out, we wish to send in new hands, and to employ this machine for the purposes of the nation.” Remove the machine, and its reconstruction will not be attempted, or will be found impracticable.*

* The endowment of the Roman Catholic church in Ireland, and in Britain too, may be brought forward as a legislative measure, (if the pleadings for additional church-endowments are listened to,) much sooner than many are aware of. The plea of equity will be irresistible with a majority of the members of the House of Commons. Then as to the alleged *impiety* of the measure, they will be at no loss to find very strong grounds for self-defence. They will be able to show that the Episcopalian church resembles, in many important points, the Roman Catholic church; that, in the recorded judgment of some eminent Episcopalian divines, the difference is not great; and they will plead, that, to Ireland generally, the latter is more acceptable and suitable than the former. They can not only point to a Unitarian synod, pensioned in Ireland, but to a pensioned Roman Catholic seminary there likewise. Still more, they can refer to a Popish established church in our own empire, against which (probably on the ground of its being an establishment,—a *sister es-*

The *political* character of the associations is denied; and some of their members seem simple enough to imagine that the country receives the denial. That some who have been induced to join them are honest in this denial, there can be no doubt. Besides, that some ladies and gentlemen well stricken in years, of weak nerves, and weaker intellect, and that not a few who are accustomed to form their opinions and receive their impulses from the dictation of some religious favourite and partizan, may persuade themselves that the Protestant religion, nay, that Christianity itself, is in danger, and that these precious associations are indispensable to the safety of the one and of the other, we can believe. But would these associations have been heard of, had a Tory ministry ruled the nation,—had the profane commoners been as averse as the godly peers, rudely to interfere with the Irish church,—had the Irish question been the question of a small mi-

tablishment) even Protestant associations never petition; and they may argue most plausibly, If it is right to pension the professors at Maynooth, is it wrong to pension the priests through the country? If you do not object to salary those who teach the priests, how can you object to extend the same indulgence to those who teach the people? Popery is the same in Canada as in Ireland: if it is bad for Canadians, it cannot be better for Irishmen; and since you allow us to establish popery there, why do you blame us if we do the same thing here? Will they not say with great plausibility, do not mind the passing clamours of churchmen—things are only bad with them till they are *established*—they have been altogether quiet respecting popery in Canada; establish it, or pension it, in Ireland, and they will let it alone there also; they will never propose to alienate a thing so sacred as church property.—Dr Chalmers, always abundantly gentle in speaking of popery, already proposes to the Commissioners to pension the Dissenters—worse than papists in the estimation of many of his brethren. Is it possible that Dr Chalmers can have worked up his mind to believe that British Dissenters, whose piety he eulogises, will abandon their convictions, and give the lie to their professions, by accepting, in any circumstances, much less in this day of their advancing triumph, the bribe of a state pension? What will be the next day-dream of this most excellent and amiable man, whose absurd and flitting visions are now scarcely less annoying to his ecclesiastical friends, than they are perceptibly disturbing to his own mind?

nority, not that of the cabinet, and of the ministerial majority; in a word, had these two systems of domination, coincident and coalesced, *Toryism and the Church*, been safe; and had Lord Melbourne and the Irish bill been disposed of? Are there ten men among them, among their leaders at least, who would not exult, could the bill and the ministry be crushed; and who do not in their heart believe that in proportion as these associations prevail, the chances multiply against liberal measures and a liberal ministry? Is there an Orange and Protestant ascendancy man in all Ireland, who does not look to these British associations as allies? Was the case put with much exaggeration by Sir J. Campbell, that the recommendation for parochial associations was tantamount to recommending the formation of Orange lodges in every parish in Scotland?

Should the wishes of these men succeed, are they prepared for the result? Do they, in their infatuation, imagine that Ireland, roused, and, to a great extent, united, can be coerced and trodden under foot, for the support of its obnoxious church, much longer with safety? The very hope of partial release,—the presence of that enlightened representative of the sovereign, who, by the justice and impartiality of his administration, has been hailed as an omen of good to Ireland,—and above all, the magic though perilous influence (perilous in any subject) of that extraordinary man, who seems at this moment, under Providence, to wield the destinies of that country, have diffused among Irishmen a disposition to tranquillity, which in no period of her history, since her connexion with Britain, has Ireland known. But if those hopes be blasted,—if every prospect of relief by the government close on this ill-fated island,—if those whom Ireland looks upon as her hereditary enemies, the foster-fathers of her innumerable abuses, the perpetrators of all her wrongs, be brought back to that power which Ireland has so long detested,—if this temporary tranquillity be broken, and the spirit of the nation break forth in its fury, who shall withstand its force? It will sweep like a hurricane over the

face of the land; and Orange ascendancy, and Protestant ascendancy, and above all, this hated Irish church establishment, will be driven like chaff before it.

Upon the whole, we consider these Protestant Associations, in the relation in which we have been considering them, as bad in principle, and in tendency mischievous. We call on our countrymen to repel them with decision. If you wish to weaken popery, do it by means in which there shall be no recognition of the Irish church system, no fraternizing with it. Let Protestants protest against this system, more loudly, if possible, than against popery, as it does more injury to true Protestantism, than popery has it in its power to do. Let them employ either such means as the various denominations of Protestants use separately; or, which is better, such as they may consistently co-operate in employing, but without implicating themselves directly or indirectly, in the unrighteousness, the violence, and the abominations of the Irish church.—As for the peril of these associations, in this country, that arises chiefly from the feverish and unsettled state of public affairs, when events in themselves, and in ordinary circumstances, of no importance, may aggravate symptoms, and hurry on a crisis. Otherwise we regard them as the most arrant politico-religious hoax ever attempted to be practised on the people of this country; who, we doubt not, will soon re-echo the sentiments of their forefathers, that the overthrow of prelacy, Irish prelacy pre-eminently, allied with power, is “THE MOST POWERFUL MEAN, BY THE BLESSING OF GOD, FOR SETTLING AND PRESERVING THE TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION, WITH PERFECT PEACE, IN HIS MAJESTY’S DOMINIONS, AND PROPAGATING THE SAME TO OTHER NATIONS, AND FOR ESTABLISHING HIS MAJESTY’S THRONE TO ALL AGES AND GENERATIONS.”

